

## Renewal Proposal Overview

The applicant group’s **designated representative** will serve as the contact for all communications, interviews, and notices from the ICSB regarding the submitted application.

**Charter School Name:** **The Excel Center - Richmond**

**Charter School**

**Designated Representative and Contact Information (Phone & Email):** Betsy Delgado, VP Mission & Education  
[bdelgado@goodwillindy.org](mailto:bdelgado@goodwillindy.org)  
 317-524-4380

**Mission Statement:** The mission of The Excel Center is to provide adults the opportunity and support to earn a high school diploma and post-secondary education while developing career paths that offer greater employment and career growth opportunities. Our schools “meet students where they are” in their education by providing a flexible structure and supportive relationships to help students manage work, life, and family concerns as they achieve their educational goals.

**School Leader/Principal:** Tyler Stewart

Current Board of Directors	
Officers:	Members:
Claudia Cummings, Chairperson	Marianne Glick
C. Perry Griffith, Jr., Vice Chair	Richard Horn
Doris L. Pryor, Secretary	Jill Kramer
Betsy Delgado, Vice President	Rose Mays
Dan Riley, Treasurer	Jay Oliver
	Don Palmer
Ex Oficio:	
Kent Kramer,	Honorary:
	Fred C. Tucker III
	Gwen A. Fountain, Ph.D.

<b>Current Grades Served</b>	<b>Future Enrollment</b>	<b>Grade Span for Next Charter Term</b>	<b>Maximum Enrollment for Next Charter Term</b>
9-12	Year 6 (2018-19)	9-12	290
9-12	Year 7 (2019-20)	9-12	290
9-12	Year 8 (2020-21)	9-12	290
9-12	Year 9 (2021-22)	9-12	290
9-12	Year 10 (2022-23)	9-12	290
9-12	At Capacity	9-12	290

**Identify ESP or partner organization (if applicable):** Not applicable

## **Section I: Performance Review**

The Excel Center, Indiana's first high school designed for adults, opened its doors in 2010, in response to Indiana's 700,000 adults without a high school diploma. Since its initial year of operating an Excel Center, Goodwill of Central and Southern Indiana (GCSI) has expanded to include twelve Indiana Excel Centers and has graduated 2,385 students (as of the end of Term 2 for the 2017-18 school year). GCSI is committed to ensuring the proof of impact of The Excel Center, and for this reason GCSI commissioned The Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) to conduct an independent study of The Excel Center outcomes.<sup>1</sup> Results of this 2017 study included:

- Since the opening of the first Excel Center in 2010, The Excel Center graduates have earned an average of 1.5 industry certifications and 2.2 dual credits during their time at the school.
- In a self-reported survey, 80% of The Excel Center graduates indicated they were either employed or enrolled in college one year after graduation.
- 70% of The Excel Center graduates are employed and experience a 50% increase in wages within six months of graduation.
- Overall, 38% of The Excel Center graduates have enrolled in post-secondary education with 76% demonstrating a two-year persistency rate.

In addition to demonstrating global achievements over time, The Excel Center has demonstrated notable achievement with the SY 2016 graduates as well. Based on data provided by the Indiana Department of Education, every Excel Center operated by Goodwill Education Initiatives (GEI) ranked in the top 20 (top 5%) of high schools statewide for the percentage of graduates demonstrating College & Career Readiness (CCR). Beyond this, an

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<sup>1</sup> Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (2017). *The Excel Center Research Report*.

Excel Center held each of the top eight spots statewide for the percentage of graduates earning an industry certification.

**Successes**

The Excel Center – Richmond has marked a number of successes since first opening its doors for the 2013-14 school year. Since the inception of Indiana’s adult high school accountability model, The Excel Center – Richmond has earned an “A” each year for its performance. For the 2016-17 school year, The Excel Center – Richmond demonstrated an adult high school graduation rate of 107% and a College and Career Readiness score of 97%. A table outlining performance related to the number of graduates and the adult high school graduation rate for the past four years is provided below.

<b>The Excel Center – Richmond Graduates and Adult High School Graduation Rate</b>				
	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
<b>Number Graduates per Year</b>	20	77	68	67
<b>Adult High School Graduation Rate</b>	26%	106%	98%	107%

For SY 2016-17, The Excel Center – Richmond graduated 67 students, with graduates requiring the completion of 4.6 terms on average to graduate. Of these 67 graduates, 63% earned dual credit as well as 63% earned an industry-approved certification. In terms of post-graduation outcomes, 46% of the SY 2016-17 graduates pursued a career, while 54% pursued college, evidencing The Excel Center’s ability to prepare students for both post-secondary education and the workforce.

Beyond the school-specific achievements for SY 2016-17, The Excel Center – Richmond was one of five Excel Centers to have the distinction of earning the highest College & Career Readiness rate (CCR) of any school in its county. The Excel Center – Richmond

was also one of four Excel Centers (among the eight high schools statewide) with 100% of minority graduates earning CCR credit.

### **Performance Dashboard Summary Measures Not Meeting or Exceeding Standard**

Based on the Indiana Charter School Board (ICSB) Accountability System, The Excel Center – Richmond has three areas identified as “Does Not Meet” within its current dashboard. Two of these metrics are:

- 1.2.a. Students graduate from high school in four years (as defined by the state’s four-year graduation rate).
- 3.2.a. The school met attendance goals.

While both of these subcategories are metrics currently identified within the ICSB’s 2016-17 Accountability System Dashboard, The Excel Centers are exempt in terms of traditional school-age structures due to their status as an adult high school as outlined in the Indiana State Board of Education’s (SBOE) Adult Accountability Rule (511 IAC 6.3). The SBOE approved this rule in October 2015 and it went into effect January 2016. Although the ICSB Accountability System was revised and approved by its Board in May of 2017, the performance dashboard still reflects the prior metrics.

While The Excel Center, as adult high schools, are not accountable to these metrics in the same way as a high school for traditional-age students, it is still noteworthy that The Excel Center – Richmond has improved annually in its 4-year and 5-year cohort graduation rates based on data available on the Indiana Department of Education’s (IDOE) Compass website.

The table below outlines the improvements in the 4-year and 5-year cohort graduation rate at The Excel Center – Richmond since SY 2013-14:

<b>The Excel Center – Richmond</b>			
<b>4-Year and 5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate Trends</b>			
	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
<b>4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate</b>	9.8%	33.3%	21.1%
<b>5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate</b>	24.4%	43.7%	--

In three years, The Excel Center – Richmond has doubled its 4-year cohort graduation rate, and in two years the 5-year cohort graduation rate has nearly doubled. The adult high school graduation rate for The Excel Center – Richmond is high (107% for SY 2016-17), as is its CCR rate (97%), and the percentage of students earning dual credit or industry certifications (63% for each). This data demonstrates The Excel Center – Richmond’s commitment to providing its students with a robust educational experience that results in a high quality Indiana diploma for its graduates.

In terms of attendance, The Excel Center understands that students who previously left high school prior to graduation often did so because some type of barrier was interfering with the student’s ability to complete their education. We also understand that when these students return to high school as adults, the same barriers (or potentially new barriers) may impede the student’s ability to attend regularly. These barriers may include the need to work to support themselves and their family, caring for a child or relative, taking care of a health-related issue, or other similar issues. As a result, The Excel Center supports its students with Coaches. Each student is assigned a Coach, who works closely with the student. The Coach supports the student in creating and monitoring the student’s graduation plan, reaching out to the student when attendance is a problem, and supporting the student in removing or addressing any barriers that may be interfering with the student’s ability to attend regularly. While adult students may still need to miss class more frequently in order

to address their responsibilities outside of the classroom as compared to traditionally-aged high school students, additional tutoring sessions and opportunities for weekly support that are a critical part of The Excel Center model can students maintain their academic work and continue to make progress towards graduation.

The third area identified as “Does Not Meet” is:

- Financial Health – Standard 3: Enrollment Variance

Within this standard, a school must be at or above 95% of its charter enrollment number in order to meet the standard. Aside from this year, The Excel Center – Richmond has been at or above 93% for this metric every year the standard was applicable. The Excel Center – Richmond believes there are two factors contributing to its enrollment variance. The first factor is the decrease in total population in Richmond, Indiana. According to data available on the United States Census Bureau website<sup>2</sup>, from 2010 to 2017 the city of Richmond has experienced an estimated overall decrease in its population of 3.1%. Because the Richmond Community School District has seen a decrease in total enrollment twice that of the estimated decrease by the United States Census Bureau, it can be inferred that the actual drop in Richmond’s population is greater than what was estimated by the Census Bureau. With the community’s overall decrease in population, there simply are not the same number of residents to take advantage of The Excel Center as when the school opened five years ago. Additionally, as is the case when The Excel Center opens in any community, it can take a few years to “right size” the school. The Excel Center model was developed with an optimum enrollment of 300 students in mind; however, the model is flexible in that it can be adjusted to meet the community’s needs in terms of ideal enrollment for that particular community. Based on the changes in Richmond’s overall enrollment, The Excel Center –

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<sup>2</sup> United States Census Bureau. (2017, December 18). Quick Facts. Richmond city, Indiana; United States. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/richmondcityindiana,US/PST045217>

Richmond will be adjusting its charter numbers with the submission of this renewal application to better fit the needs of the community.



## **Section II: Improvement**

### **(1) Sustain and build academic, organizational, and operational success over the next term.**

- (a) **Governing board**
- (b) **Leadership team**
- (c) **Teaching staff**
- (d) **Academic achievement**

#### **(a) Governing Board**

With GCSI's Excel Center network now encompassing twelve schools, The Excel Center board of directors identified the need for an advisory board to be created at each Excel Center. As a result, the Community Advisory Team (CAT) was developed. The purpose of the CAT is three-fold: to strengthen partnerships between the local Excel Center and its community members, focus on enrollment and student retention rates, and foster student opportunities such as internships, job training, and pathways to employment. The CAT will meet on a regular basis and each Excel Center director will provide updates to the Senior Director of the Excel Center Network and Operations as a means of ensuring key updates and information are shared with The Excel Center board of directors. Since the inception of the CATs, each Excel Center's CAT has been established and met at least once, with a summary provided to The Excel Center board of directors to maintain communication and ensure the governing board stays abreast of each Excel Center's activities and issues.

#### **(b) Leadership Team**

Since the start of the 2016-17 school year, GEI has undertaken a comprehensive review of its various school leadership development offerings. The audit of these programs was conducted to ensure leadership development trainings move beyond solely focusing on straightforward skill development, and instead broaden to focus on leadership development. This review of leadership development initiatives resulted in

a revision in content for the Technical Leadership Series, a development opportunity offered to new and aspiring Excel Center directors. As a result of the revisions, the training series is now more aptly named the Leadership Series in order to reflect the intentional focus on leadership development. Additionally, GEI's other key leadership development series has now been separated into two distinct tracks. This division will allow the development activities to best align with the specific needs of the participants as it relates to the various roles within GEI. The process of revising these professional development tracks has been a collaborative effort of GEI leadership, GCSI Human Resources, and The Excel Center directors.

In addition to these leadership development opportunities, The Excel Center directors participate in monthly Directors' Meetings. These meetings provide ongoing training, development, and information as a means of educating and strengthening the knowledge base of The Excel Center directors.

### **(c) Teaching staff**

At each Excel Center, the teaching staff is supported by Lead Teachers, who serve as professional instructional coaches. Lead Teachers play an active role in the development of the teachers' craft by providing feedback and guidance. Additionally, Lead Teachers participate in The Excel Center network-wide monthly Lead Teacher meetings. At these meetings Lead Teachers share strategies and techniques for supporting teachers, as well as share best practice for what works in their own Excel Center so as to elicit the best educational outcomes from students.

Lead Teachers also receive support from GEI's Curriculum Services Director, who can work with schools on specific initiatives. Over the course of the last year the

Curriculum Services Director facilitated curriculum teams for the core content areas in order for teachers to conduct a comprehensive review of all Excel Center curriculum maps. The project ensured curriculum maps aligned to the current Indiana Academic Standards, and also revised unit and final assessments. While the work of curriculum alignment and review should be ongoing, this project provided a much needed refocusing effort on the interrelatedness of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

**(d) Academic achievement**

As mentioned in the section above, a significant part of last year was spent with curriculum teams reviewing curriculum maps for each course, ensuring curriculum maps aligned to the most recent Indiana Academic Standards covered in each course, and developing consistent unit and final assessments for courses. With Indiana's shift from the ECA to ISTEP, The Excel Center has experienced the same change in performance as other Indiana high schools. The work completed last year during the curriculum review project will be used to compare student performance in courses to their performance on state assessments as a means of ensuring there is consistency between state expectations, student performance on state assessments, and what students are experiencing in their courses.

The Curriculum Services Director is visiting each Excel Center at least once per Term in order to meet with Lead Teachers, observe classrooms, and support teachers with fidelity of implementation of the curriculum. Additionally, the Curriculum Services Director is available to provide school-specific trainings and professional development as requested by individual Excel Centers.

**(2) Identify any particular weaknesses, challenges, areas for improvement, and detail school's plan for addressing these needs.**

The Excel Center – Richmond is currently working through two challenges. The first challenge, which is affecting greater Richmond as well as a large part of Indiana, is the opioid crisis. The second challenge, which is influenced by the opioid crisis, is the influx of minors. The Excel Center – Richmond is seeing enroll.

Within recent years, The Excel Center – Richmond has seen a shift in the age of students enrolling. While the majority of students are still over 18, there has been a steady increase in the number of younger students enrolling at the school. This change has affected the overall culture of the building, as has the fact that many of these young people often have ties to the opioid crisis. In order to respond to the issues that have arisen with the increase in minor students, The Excel Center – Richmond is revisiting procedures that were not as necessary to the school's successful day-to-day operations when the population was primarily adults. However, now that the student population is younger, the staff finds itself dealing with issues more common in high schools with traditional-aged students (e.g. tardies, behavior, etc.). The school director is updating the school's code of conduct and emergency manual so that younger students have very specifically stated rules and expectations – something that wasn't as necessary when the student population was overwhelmingly over the age of 18. As one example of what is being addressed in school expectations, prior to the influx of younger students, tardiness was not a problem. The adult students came to class on time and reminders of expectations around this simply weren't needed. For the minor students who have recently enrolled, tardiness (as well as some other basic school procedures) are affecting the overall school culture. Through the revisiting of school procedures and intentional teaching of expectations, the school director is confident this new challenge

can be addressed.

Along with the increase in the number of students under the age of 18 enrolling in The Excel Center – Richmond, there has also been an increase in the number of students who show up outside of an 8-week term wishing to enroll. Because of the structure of the 8-week terms and the condensed nature of the blended courses indicative of The Excel Center model, students new to the model found it extremely challenging to begin classes at The Excel Center mid-term. Courses are designed specific to an 8-week term, with students earning credits in multiple content areas in that condensed time period. For students wanting to start The Excel Center mid-term, this condensed schedule with intertwined courses was not navigable in less than 8 weeks without compromising the integrity of the courses offered (and subsequently, the resulting credits). However, with the desire of The Excel Center – Richmond (as well as other Excel Centers) to respond to the increase in students arriving mid-term, a flex enrollment opportunity was created for schools. So as to maintain the integrity of The Excel Center model and also the integrity of the credits offered, the Curriculum Services Director identified individual courses that could still be taught in condensed timeframes consistent with the model, while allowing a new student to begin accessing their education in a more efficient manner. These courses have a curriculum map and corresponding assessments that allow for the course to be taught in blocks of time over a period of two or four weeks, thus maintaining The Excel Center’s priority of direct instruction and engaging students as soon as they enroll.

In addition to the school seeing a shift in student make-up related to age, a number of students are directly affected by the opioid crisis in Richmond. To address this challenge, school staff is working with community partners and developing relationships

with outside agencies as a means of connecting students to assistance and support. Additionally, the director of The Excel Center – Richmond is researching the possibility of connecting with a drug treatment center and identifying Medicaid options that may be available for students or their family members. This initiative is still in the very early phases of discussion, but the plan would be to continue to discuss options for connecting students to resources, develop a path for support based on student need, and then implement resources needed as an issue arises.

**(3) Any additional evidence, beyond data in dashboard, that supports school's case for renewal.**

All evidence and explanation is provided throughout the other sections of this renewal application.

### **Section III: Proposed Changes to Charter Agreement**

Based on enrollment trends during the course of the last charter, The Excel Center – Richmond is requesting an adjustment to its charter enrollment from 300 to 290.

## Budget Narrative: The Excel Center - Richmond

### **REVENUE**

#### **Revenue Assumptions**

*The Excel Center - Richmond is expecting to operate with 290 students during Years 6 through 10.*

#### **State Revenue**

*Adult Learner:* State funding through the Adult Learners appropriation is assumed to remain at \$6,750 per student during Years 6-10.

#### **Federal Revenue**

*Public Law 101-476 (IDEA):* Federal funding includes funding through the Part B Federal Special Education grants. Funding within the five-year budget is projected to remain flat.

### **EXPENDITURES**

#### **Inflation**

Certain expenses are projected to increase annually due to inflation. The budget model assumes an average 2.5% increase per annum.

#### **Personnel Expenses**

*Wages, Benefits, and Payroll Taxes:* Our salaries/wages (before taxes and benefits) will have a ceiling of 39% of Adult Learners funding across The Excel Center network. The attrition of staff each year has historically created savings which are used to provide adjustments to continuing staff.

*Professional Development:* Includes ongoing education at local conferences and trainings, tuition reimbursement for college classes taken by staff, and for curriculum development.

*Bonuses:* Bonuses include teacher incentive pay for high performance. This amount was less than \$10,000 and is included within benefits percentage.

*Tuition Reimbursement:* Includes reimbursement for staff participating in the Goodwill Tuition Reimbursement program. This amount was less than \$10,000 and is included within benefits percentage.

*Stipends:* Includes \$5,000 annual stipends for the Lead Teacher and Lead Coach. Also included is a \$1,500 stipend for the school's "Tech Champion".

#### **Instructional Supplies and Resources**

*Textbooks:* Projects \$500 for textbooks each year.



*Technology:* Technology expenses include projectors and other miscellaneous media/classroom equipment.

*Computers:* Projected cost of \$50,000 during Year 8 for a technology refresh.

*Software:* Software includes installed office software, instructional software, remediation software, and assessment software.

*Other Classroom Supplies:* Costs include binders, printing expenses and other materials used for classroom instruction.

*Other (Dual Credit and Student Certification courses):* Costs for students to attend dual credit courses and to receive certifications to assist with career readiness.

### **Board Expenses**

Board expenses for training, development, and supplies are included in the fees listed on line 132 at the bottom of each budget.

### **Professional Purchased or Contracted Services**

Average expenditures across each charter were used to develop the 5-year projection. Expenses, such as internet, were budgeted at full cost rather than the discounted e-rate expense.

*Legal:* This includes miscellaneous legal fees for contract review and/or ad hoc needs. Legal Fees are higher every two-years in relation to additional lobbying expenditures.

*Printing/Newsletter/Annual Report Services:* Estimate includes costs for materials.

*Internet Services and Telephone/Telecommunication Services:* Costs for internet and telephone usage calculated based upon current non-discounted billing rates.

*Insurance:* Includes all required coverage. The budget was determined using current rates.

*Travel:* Travel allows staff to visit The Excel Center schools across the state and to attend trainings and conferences.

*Postage:* Postage rate based on current Excel Center postage usage.

*Special Education Services:* Costs incurred include testing and other special services required to meet the individual needs of special education students. This line item does not include staff expense.

*Transportation:* The budget was determined using historical transportation expenditures to assist students with a transportation barrier.

*Student Information System:* The Student Information System cost is included in the amount listed for software subscriptions.

*Security Services:* Includes fees to Securitas for on-site security. The budget was determined using historical expenditures.

### **Facilities Expense**

*Facility:* The lease renewals with 5% rent escalations, upon renewal, are factored into the rental expense budget. In addition, the new sites were budgeted with rents comparable to similar sized schools.

*Property taxes:* Two of our facilities incur real estate property taxes. We have assumed 5% increases on the assessed values each year.

*Depreciation:* Depreciation averages \$100k per month currently. With some upcoming capital purchases, we have assumed that depreciation, per site, will average \$130k each year.

*Utilities:* The budget was determine using the current historical expenditures.

*Custodial:* The budget was determined using the monthly rate of the current service provider.

### **Other Costs:**

*Indiana Charter School Board Administrative Fee:* Fee is set at 1% of Adult Learner funds.

*CMO/EMO Fees:* Includes Board Expenses and all administrative functions of the school (Superintendent, Curriculum, Registrar, Student Data, State Reporting, Accounting/Payroll, Technology Services, etc.).

Exhibit C

Statement of Assurances

This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the applicant for renewal and submitted with the Renewal Application. An application will be considered incomplete if it is not accompanied by the Assurances Form signed by an authorized individual.

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for charter renewal for The Excel Center (name of school) to be located at Richmond, Indiana (location of school) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further I understand that, if awarded a renewal, the school:

1. A resolution or motion has been adopted by the charter school applicant's governing body that authorizes the submission of this application, including all understanding and assurances contained herein, directing and authorizing the applicant's designated representative to act in connection with the application and to provide such additional information as required.
2. Recipients will operate the charter school in compliance with all federal and state laws, including Indiana Charter Schools Law as described in all relevant sections of IC § 20-24.
3. Recipients will, for the life of the charter, participate in all data reporting and evaluation activities as required by the ICSB and the Indiana Department of Education. See in particular IC § 20-20-8-3 and relevant sections of IC § 20-24.
4. Recipients will comply with all relevant federal laws including, but not limited to, the *Age Discrimination in Employment Act* of 1975, Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act* of 1964, Title IX of the *Education Amendments of 1972*, section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act* of 1973, Part B of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, and section 427 of the *General Education Provision Act*.
5. Recipients will comply with all provisions of the Non regulatory Guidance—Public Charter Schools Program of the U.S. Department of Education, which includes the use of a lottery for enrollment if the charter school is oversubscribed, as well as with applicable Indiana law. See also relevant sections of IC § 20-24.
6. Recipients shall ensure that a student's records, and, if applicable, a student's individualized education program as defined at 20 U.S.C. § 1401(14) of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, will follow the student, in accordance with applicable federal and state law.
7. Recipients will comply with all provisions of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*, as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* ("ESSA"), including but not limited to, provisions on school prayer, the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, the Armed Forces Recruiter Access to Students and Student Recruiting Information, the Unsafe School Choice Option, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") and assessments.
8. Recipients will operate with the organizer serving in the capacity of fiscal agent for the charter school and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 9. Recipients will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10. Recipients will indemnify and hold harmless the ICSB, the State of Indiana, all school corporations providing funds to the charter school (if applicable), and their officers, directors, agents and employees, and any successors and assigns from any and all liability, cause of action, or other injury or damage in any way relating to the charter school or its operation.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 11. Recipients understand that the ICSB may revoke the charter if the ICSB deems that the recipient is not fulfilling the academic goals, fiscal management, or legal and operational responsibilities outlined in the charter.	
<b>Signature from Authorized Representative of the Charter School Applicant</b>	
I, the undersigned, am an authorized representative of the charter school applicant and do hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge and belief. In addition, I do hereby certify to the assurances contained above.	
<u>Print Name and Title</u> Detsy Delgado VP, Mission & Education	<u>Date</u> 12/20/17
<u>Sign Name</u> 	